



**CITY OF SUNNYVALE  
REPORT  
Planning Commission**

**July 24, 2006**

**SUBJECT:**           **2006-0599** - Application on a 4,643 square-foot site located at **516 Fern Ridge Court** (near Yukon Dr) in an R-2/PD (Low-Medium Density Residential/Planned Development) Zoning District.

Motion               Special Development Permit to allow a 343 square foot second story addition to an existing two-story home for a total of 2,168 square feet resulting in a 47% Floor Area Ratio where 45% may be allowed without Planning Commission review.

**REPORT IN BRIEF**

**Existing Site Conditions**           Bahl Patio Home

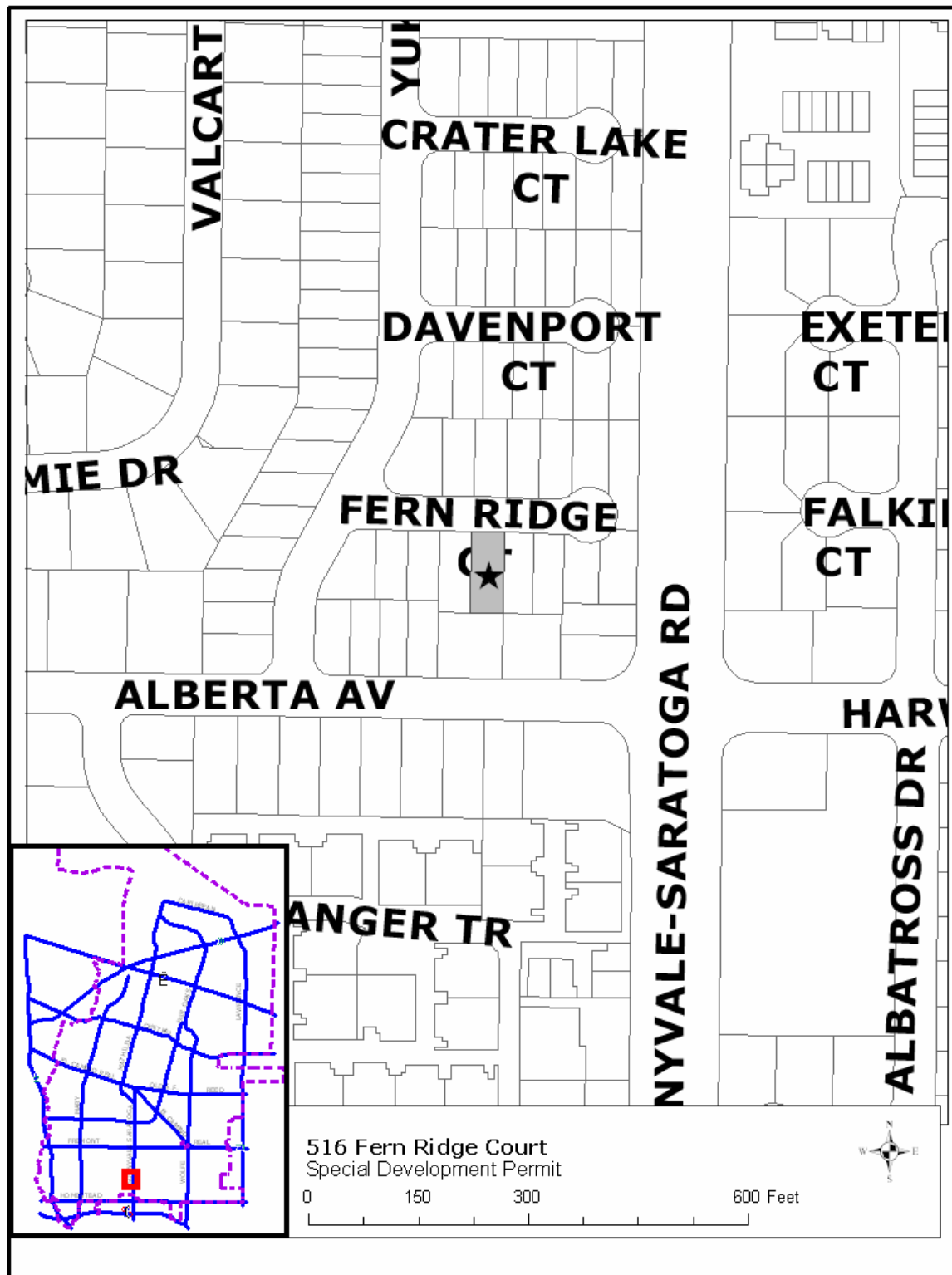
**Surrounding Land Uses**

North	Bahl Patio Home
South	Duplex
East	Two-Story Single Family Home
West	Bahl Patio Home

**Issues**                               Compatibility with neighborhood

**Environmental Status**           A Class 3 Categorical Exemption relieves this project from California Environmental Quality Act provisions and City Guidelines.

**Staff Recommendation**           Approve with Conditions



**PROJECT DATA TABLE**

	EXISTING	PROPOSED	REQUIRED/ PERMITTED
General Plan	Residential Low-Medium Density	Same	Residential Low-Medium Density
Zoning District	R-2/PD	Same	R-2/PD
Lot Size (s.f.)	4,643	Same	8,000 min.
Gross Floor Area (s.f.)	2,168	2,168	No max.
Lot Coverage (%)	36%	Same	40% max.
Floor Area Ratio (FAR)	39%	47%	45% max. without PC review
Building Height (ft.)	20'	21' 6"	30' max.
No. of Stories	2	2	2 max.
Setbacks (First/Second Facing Property)			
Front (First)	15' 6"	15' 6"	20' (15' 6" min. per SDP)
(Second)	49' 6"	49' 6"	25' min.
Left Side (First)	0'	0'	4 min. (12 combined) (0' per SDP)
(Second)	20'	7'	7' min (18' combined)
Right Side (First)	8' 4"	8' 4"	4 min. (12 combined)
(Second)	12' 10"	12' 10" (23' to addition)	7' min (18' combined)
Rear (First)	26' 1"	26' 1"	20' min.(10' permitted with 25% encroachment)
(Second)	40' 11"	29' 11"	20' min.
Parking			
Total Spaces	4	Same	4 min.
Covered Spaces	2	Same	2 min.

★ Starred items indicate existing deviations from Sunnyvale Municipal Code requirements.

## **ANALYSIS**

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### **Description of Proposed Project**

The proposed project is a 343 square foot second story addition to an existing two-story Bahl Patio Home. Currently, only a den is located on the second floor. The proposed additional floor area on the second story would be allocated for two bedrooms and a bathroom. All proposed additions on properties located in a PD combining district require a Special Development Permit. As the home exceeds 45% Floor Area Ratio (F.A.R.), a Planning Commission design review is required. The addition would also result in 47% (46.7%) F.A.R. The structure was built in 1968 as a zero lot line patio home. The original Special Development Permit for the subdivision did not make any provisions that would prevent future proposals for two-story additions.

### **Background**

**Previous Actions on the Site:** The following table summarizes previous planning applications related to the subject site.

<b>File Number</b>	<b>Brief Description</b>	<b>Hearing/Decision</b>	<b>Date</b>
1968-0059 – 1968-0061	Rezone a collection of sites (including subject site) from R-1 to R-2/PD. Tentative Map for subdivision into 88 lots. Special Development Permit for 88 Patio Homes	City Council/ Approved	6/24/1968, 7/2/1968, 8/27/1968

### **Environmental Review**

A Class 3 Categorical Exemption relieves this project from California Environmental Quality Act provisions and City Guidelines. Class 3 Categorical Exemptions includes minor additions to existing homes.

### **Special Development Permit**

**Site Layout:** The 4,643 square foot lot was approved as one of the early small lot single family home subdivisions in Sunnyvale. The proposed addition would result in an overall floor area ratio (F.A.R.) of approximately 47% (currently 39% F.A.R.). The existing front and first story side yard setback were approved as deviations under the original Special Development Permit. The home was built with a 0' first story setback along the left side. The proposed addition meets current side and rear setbacks as noted in the "Project Data Table" on

Page 3. The addition is setback considerably from the front property line at approximately 49'5" and would be setback an additional 7 feet from the left side. (Site Plan in Attachment C)

**Floor Plan:** The additional area on the second floor would be utilized for two bedrooms and a bathroom and is accessed from the existing den area, which would remain, and no modifications are proposed on the first floor.

The following Guidelines were considered in analysis of the project site design.

<b>Single Family Home Design Techniques (Site Layout)</b>	<b>Comments</b>
<i>D. Where significant additions to existing homes are planned, it is generally better to place those additions at the rear of the house or at the side, if side yard setbacks allow.</i>	Although not considered significant in size, the addition will be located towards the rear of the home.

**Architecture:** The home was part of a larger subdivision of homes designed by Donald Bahl during the late 1960's. The architecture of these homes is unique and includes a steep-pitched roof. Currently, the home includes a second-story den area. The proposal would expand the second story and create a larger and more functional floor space. The new area would match the existing roof form with a similar high-pitch roof. The addition incorporates a front facing gable. Wood siding is proposed along each façade of the addition similar to the existing home. The peak of the roof is slightly higher than the existing home at 21' 6" (18" difference).

The following Guidelines were considered in analysis of the project architecture.

<b>Single Family Home Design Techniques (Architecture)</b>	<b>Comments</b>
<i>2.2 2. Respect the scale, bulk and character of homes in the adjacent neighborhood</i>	Newer homes located east of the site are similar in overall size to the subject structure. The 343 square foot addition does not result in a significantly larger home than nearby Bahl Patio homes to the north and west. The architectural character of the home is maintained through the design and similar form of the addition.
<i>3.5 J. Use roof forms for additions that blend comfortably with the roofs of the existing home.</i>	The addition includes a similar roof form and pitch as the existing home.

Single Family Home Design Techniques (Architecture)	Comments
<i>3.7 C. Carry materials and trim used on the front façade to all other sides of the house. Avoid designs where only the front of the house is given interesting materials and details</i>	The second-story addition incorporates wood siding on each elevation and will match the current home in terms of color and roof material.

**Landscaping:** The site meets landscaping and useable open space standards for the R-2 Zoning District. No trees are proposed to be removed as part of this proposal.

**Parking/Circulation:** The site meets parking standards for single-family homes with two covered garage spaces and two uncovered driveway spaces.

**Compliance with Development Standards/Guidelines:** The Special Development of the subdivision allowed for the construction of the home on the 4,643 square foot lot. The home was also built with a 15' 6" front yard setback and with no side yard setback along the east side of the first story. Staff finds that the proposed overall size of the home (2,168 s.f., including a 478 s.f. garage) is not considered excessive or out of scale with other homes in the neighborhood.

**Expected Impact on the Surroundings:** As a result of the second-story addition, a visual change will be created from the street and neighboring properties. Staff finds that the design incorporates similar architectural form as the current home. Given the proposed layout of the second story with no windows positioned towards each of the side yards, staff finds that privacy impacts are not significant. The bedroom window along the rear elevation is setback 30' from the rear property line adjacent to the duplex property.

### **Fiscal Impact**

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No fiscal impacts other than normal fees and taxes are expected.

### **Public Contact**

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Staff has received six letters from concerned residents from the neighboring area. See Attachment #D to review these letters. Primary concerns addressed in these letters note the loss of privacy and the architectural form of the Bahl Patio design. One of the primary elements to the design of the Bahl Patio Homes is to preserve privacy of the outdoor patio area. Much, if not all, of the homes were built with 8-foot walls and window locations that preserve private useable area for the residents. The neighbors located at 520 and 524 Fern

Ridge (west of the site) have noted concerns with privacy. No windows are located within the second story side yards and the new window located at the rear elevation is setback significantly beyond the minimum 20 foot requirement at approximately 30 feet from the rear property line (28'6" from the side property line). Staff finds that the second story addition uses similar form as the existing home and new privacy impacts are minimized with the proposed window location.

Nearby residents have also noted to staff that these homes are single-story; however, by Municipal Code, these homes built with a similar den area are considered two-story. Staff is also concerned with the precedent of two-story additions to this style of homes; therefore, each proposal is reviewed on a case-by-case basis with specific attention to architectural compatibility and the preservation of privacy to neighboring properties. Staff finds that the design and configuration of the 343 square foot addition adequately accommodates these concerns. Staff also notes that the homes adjacent to the south (duplex) and east (two-story home built in 1994) are not designed as Bahl Patio Homes.

A proposal for a larger second story addition to a Bahl Patio Home on Cashmere Court was reviewed by staff in 2003. In staff's opinion as noted in the report 2003-0103, the design lacked compatibility with the existing structure and nearby homes. Although roof form can vary amongst Bahl Patio homes, the proposal on Cashmere was not oriented towards the street which is consistent with these types of homes. The Cashmere proposal increased the overall height considerably and the mass and scale of the addition were of primary concern. In addition, the project differed from this proposal as the second story on Cashmere extended the zero lot line on the second story. That proposal was recommended for denial and ultimately withdrawn by the applicant. In addition to being much smaller in scale, staff finds that the architecture of the current proposal is much more compatible with the Bahl Patio design.

<b>Notice of Public Hearing</b>	<b>Staff Report</b>	<b>Agenda</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Published in the <i>Sun</i> newspaper</li><li>• Posted on the site</li><li>• 7 notices mailed to property owners and residents adjacent to the project site</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Posted on the City of Sunnyvale's Website</li><li>• Provided at the Reference Section of the City of Sunnyvale's Public Library</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Posted on the City's official notice bulletin board</li><li>• City of Sunnyvale's Website</li></ul>

## **Conclusion**

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**Findings and General Plan Goals:** Staff was able to make the required Findings based on the justifications for the Special Development Permit. Findings and General Plan Goals are located in Attachment A.

**Conditions of Approval:** Conditions of Approval are located in Attachment B.

## **Alternatives**

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1. Approve the Special Development Permit with the attached conditions.
2. Approve the Special Development Permit with modified conditions.
3. Deny the Special Development Permit.



**Recommendation**

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Alternative 1.

Prepared by:

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Project Planner

Reviewed by:

Gerri Caruso  
Principal Planner

Reviewed by:

Trudi Ryan  
Planning Officer

Attachments:

- A. Recommended Findings
- B. Recommended Conditions of Approval
- C. Site and Architectural Plans
- D. Letters from nearby residents

**Recommended Findings - Special Development Permit**

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Goals and Policies that relate to this project are:

**Land Use and Transportation Element**

**Policy N1.4** – *Preserve and enhance the high quality character of residential neighborhoods.*

1. The proposed use attains the objectives and purposes of the General Plan of the City of Sunnyvale (*Finding Met*).

The project meets all current development standards and incorporates design standards set forth in the “Sunnyvale Single Family Home Design Techniques” with the exception of lot size and setback requirements, which were approved per the original Special Development Permit for the site.

2. The proposed use ensures that the general appearance of proposed structures, or the uses to be made of the property to which the application refers, will not impair either the orderly development of, or the existing uses being made of, adjacent properties (*Finding Met*).

The second story addition uses similar architectural form as the current structure and will not negatively impact neighboring properties or the surround area. Privacy impacts as a result of the addition are minimized with the proposed design which incorporates only one new window along the rear elevation (setback approximately 30 feet from the rear property line). In addition to meeting solar shading requirements, the additional floor area is positioned closer to the two-story property adjacent to the east. The addition is located over 23 feet away from the property line to the west

**Recommended Conditions of Approval - Special Development Permit**

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In addition to complying with all applicable City, County, State and Federal Statutes, Codes, Ordinances, Resolutions and Regulations, Permittee expressly accepts and agrees to comply with the following conditions of approval of this Permit:

Unless otherwise noted, all conditions shall be subject to the review of approval of the Director of Community Development.

**1. GENERAL CONDITIONS**

- A. Any major site and architectural plan modifications shall be treated as an amendment of the original approval and shall be subject to approval at a public hearing except that minor changes of the approved plans may be approved at staff level by the Director of Community Development.
- B. The Design Review shall be null and void one year from the date of approval by the final review authority at a public hearing if the approval is not exercised, unless a written request for an extension is received prior to expiration date.
- C. The Conditions of Approval shall be reproduced on the cover page of the plans submitted for a Building permit for this project.
- D. Roof material shall match the existing home.

**2. COMPLY WITH OR OBTAIN OTHER PERMITS**

- A. Obtain necessary Building permits